

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 RABAT 05650 211005Z

15

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AGR-05 AID-05 EB-07 IO-10 RSC-01

COME-00 TRSE-00 SWF-01 SP-02 NSC-05 CIEP-01 SS-15

STR-01 OMB-01 CEA-01 CIAE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00 PA-01

USIA-06 PRS-01 /091 W

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R 210915Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3843

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USEC BRUSSELS

USOECN PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN MO

SUBJECT: KING'S INDEPENDENCE DAY SPEECH CALLS FOR FOOD SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN MOROCCO

1. KING'S NATIONWIDE INDEPENDENCE DAY ADDRESS (DELIVERED WITH MOROCCAN PUNCTUALITY THREE DAYS AFTER THE EVENT) WAS LARGELY DEVOTED TO DISMAL WORLD FOOD AND GENERAL ECONOMIC OUTLOOK. FOLLOWING ARE MAJOR POINTS OF IMPORTANCE:

A. SUBSIDIES NOW BEING PAID BY THE GOM TO COVER THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RAPIDLY RISING WORLD FOOD PRICES AND THE RELATIVELY MODEST PRICES PAID BY MOROCCAN CONSUMERS FOR SUGAR, BREAD AND COOKING OIL ARE BECOMING UNSUSTAINABLE. TO GO ON PAYING THESE OUT OF PHOSPHATE

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PAGE 02 RABAT 05650 211005Z

REVENUES (FORECAST TO AMOUNT TO \$1.05 BILLION THIS YEAR) WILL

DIMINISH THE NATION'S POTENTIAL FOR ACHIEVING IMPORTANT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES. MOROCCO WOULD THUS "NEVER PLAY THE ROLE WE OUGHT TO PLAY" IN THE WORLD. MOROCCO MUST THEREFORE START NOW TO STRIVE FOR SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN FOODSTUFFS ESPECIALLY SUGAR, WHEAT, AND COOKING OIL, IN PART BY REDUCED CONSUMPTION. B. TO ACHIEVE FOOD SELF-SUFFICIENCY MOROCCO MUST: (1) INCREASE ACREAGE DEVOTED TO SUGAR BEETS, WHEAT AND OIL SEEDS, (2) RAISE AVERAGE YIELD PER ACRE FROM 17 TO 20 QUINTALS PER HACTARE, (3) IMPROVE METHODS FOR DRY LAND CULTIVATION (NOW ESTIMATED AT 7 MILLION HECTARES), AND (4) CONSTRUCT SIX SUGAR REFINERIES OVER NEXT THREE YEARS.

2. LATE IN SPEECH KING SWITCHED TO LOCAL DIALECT TO STRESS NEED TO INCREASE AREA OF IRRIGATED LAND. CURRENT 5-YEAR PLAN (1973-78) CALLS FOR IRRIGATING 20,000 HECTARES PER YEAR; RECENTLY THE KING ASKED AGRICULTURE MINISTER TO INCREASE FIGURE TO 50,000 HECTARES PER YEAR. KING NOW ASSERTS THAT IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO BRING 100,000 HECTARES UNDER IRRIGATION EACH YEAR. HE PROPOSES TO DO THIS BY SHORTCUTTING BIDDING PROCESS TO ENTER INTO DIRECT CONTRACT WITH LARGE INTERNATIONAL FIRMS. KING DID NOT MENTION ANY NAMES, AND WE DO NOT KNOW WHICH, IF ANY, FIRMS HE HAS IN MIND--THOUGH HE MENTIONED EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST IN MOROCCAN AGRICULTURE ON PART OF "EUROPEAN, LATIN (SIC) AMERICANS, AND OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES." MOROCCO HAS APPROXIMATELY 300,000 HECTARES CURRENTLY UNDER CULTIVATION. WITH AN ADDITIONAL 200,000 HECTARES, MOROCCO WOULD JUST ABOUT ACHIEVE SELF SUFFICIENCY IN FOOD.

3. SPEECH MAY MARK NEW DEPARTURE IN MOROCCO'S AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES AND MAY AFFORD EXPANDED OPPORTUNITIES FOR AMERICAN PARTICIPATION IN IRRIGATION, LAND DEVELOPMENT, AND FOOD PROCESSING. MAY ALSO PORTEND NEW OPENING TO EAST-BLOC SINCE KING SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED POSSIBILITY IMPORTING TECHNOLOGY FROM "SOCIALIST COUNTRIES" IN CONNECTION WITH CONSTRUCTION SUGAR REFINERIES. SOVIETS RECENTLY AGREED TO BUILD MAJOR DAM AND IRRIGATION ON THE LOUKOS RIVER WHICH WOULD BRING ABOUT 18,000 HECTARES UNDER CULTIVATION IN THREE YEARS. SOVIETS ALSO INTERESTED IN FERTILIZER CO-PRODUCTION WHICH COULD LEAD TO AGRI-INDUSTRY TIE-INS.

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PAGE 03 RABAT 05650 211005Z

4. COMMENT: KING HAS SET A TALL ORDER. EVEN A GOOD TRY COULD PRODUCE SIGNIFICANT RESULTS. NOTABLE BY ABSENCE WAS ANY REFERENCE TO SPEEDED UP LAND DISTRUBUTION OR OTHER ACCELERATED HELP TO SMALL-HOLDERS. END COMMENT.  
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## Message Attributes

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